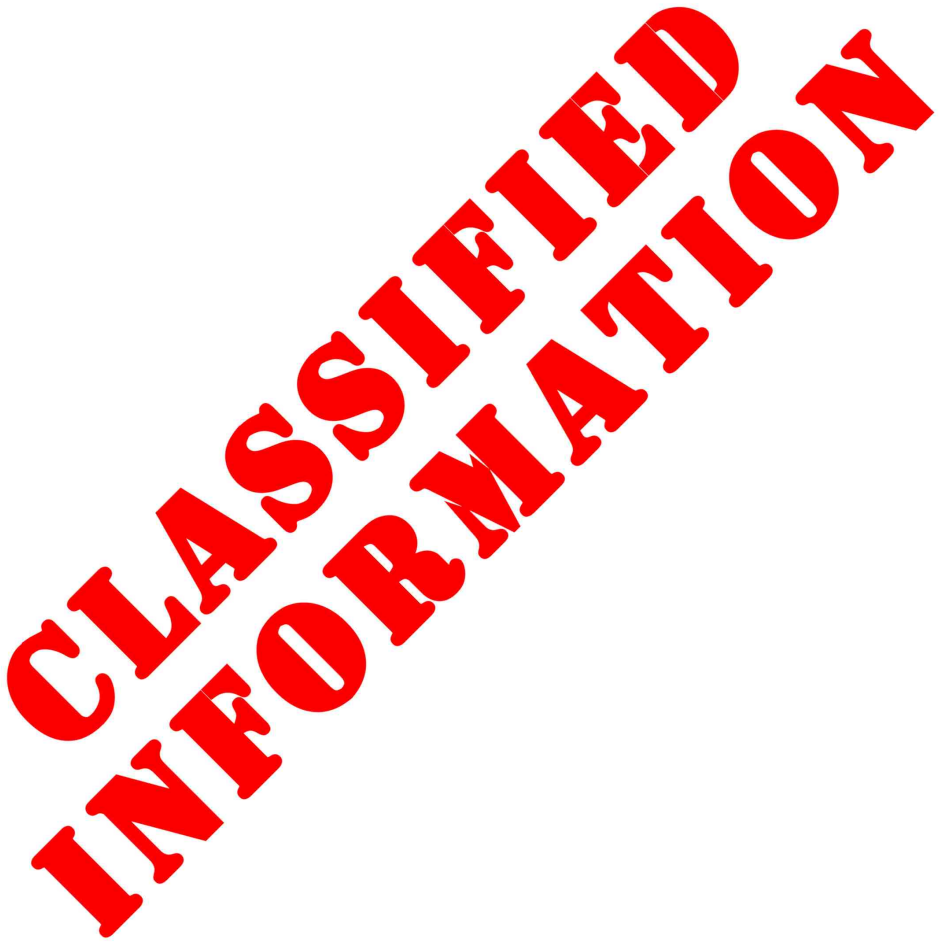
Memorandum on the rapid increase in vigilantism in the United States in 2026

By Karl M. Wright

January 9th 2026



As mentioned in a previous dossier, Renee Good was killed by a Homeland Security ICE agent on January 7th 2026. And as was hypothesized, Ms Good became the face of a cause, and a martyr for a rising movement. It was expected that she would become a martyr, but what was not expected was the speed and determination of those who sainted her as a martyr, in pursuit of their vigilantism. Within a day, the shooter was identified by the internet masses as Jonathan Ross, and now the United States press and media has set to work hounding his every move.

Vigilantism in the United States is nothing new, but it has become very uncommon for the last sixty years as America moved into a more diverse and civil society. In a civil society, the population at large trusts that their leaders and courts will handle matters in a just and fair way, and have no need to take the law into their own hands or resort to vigilantism. However, in the last year, America has experience a rapid retreat in the consideration of the rule of law by the executive branch. As such, when the perception is that there is no law and there is no justice in your society, the hordes tend to grab for their pitchforks and torches. And what we are seeing in America right now is a rapid increase in vigilantism and proverbial lynch mobs.

It would seem that a great many hordes of Americans right now don't believe for one single second that the FBI is going to hold Jonathan Ross accountable, and so they've set to work to lynch him themselves. In a civil society, this would not be happening, but the United States of America is not a civil society right now. This presents very real consequences for those traveling to the US for any reason. First of all, Homeland Security and Border Patrol has been very aggressive in harassing individuals who travel to the US, and have been denying entry for sometimes the most arbitrary and flippant reasons. And there have been many reports of ICE deporting tourists after only a couple weeks of vacation, again usually for arbitrary and flippant reasons. When you add in the roving mobs of angry vigilantes, you have a very dangerous place to even set foot in.

It would be very advisable to European Union states to start issuing travel warnings regarding the United States. The US is not a safe place to visit right now, and it should be so noted in official foreign secretary documentation. It would be a disservice to both the citizens of the EU and, quite frankly, international relations, to ignore this threat. The bad optics of a travel warning for the United States by EU members would at least in theory give some manner of embarrassment to America for the their state of disarray. But even if it doesn't achieve that goal, it preserves the safety and security of European Union citizens.

There is no indication whatsoever that the rocket-like rise in United States vigilantism and civil unrest will abate anytime soon. Most likely, it will get much worse before it gets better. It is highly recommended that world states take a very serious look at the situation in America, and stop looking at the US through the rose-colored glasses of the past. The United States of America is rapidly heading towards Failed-State status, and ignoring all the glaring warning signs is not a reasonable reaction to it.

NEWS & POLITICS

Star Tribune identifies ICE agent who fatally shot woman in Minneapolis

Jonathan Ross was dragged in a separate incident last year by a fleeing driver, according to court records.

By Liz Sawyer, Andy Mannix and Sarah Nelson
The Minnesota Star Tribune

JANUARY 8, 2026 AT 11:10AM

A screenshot of a video posted by Max Nesterak on the social media site X shows ICE officer Jonathan Ross shortly after he fatally shot Renee Nicole Good in Minneapolis on Jan. 7. (Screenshot via Max Nesterak on X)

The Immigration and Customs Enforcement agent who fatally shot a 37-year-old woman in Minneapolis on Jan. 7 is Jonathan Ross, the same officer who was dragged and injured by a fleeing driver in a separate incident last year, according to a person with knowledge of the case and verified by court documents.

Little public information is available about Ross, described only by federal officials as “an experienced” officer.

On Wednesday morning, Ross was embedded with a group of federal agents on a targeted crackdown in south Minneapolis when Renee Nicole Good was shot. ICE has not reported the identity of the shooter and did not respond to request for comment for this story.

A photo of Ross’ face has since circulated on social media, as online sleuths have attempted to identify him.

On June 17, Ross was participating in an arrest of Roberto Carlos Munoz-Guatemala, a Mexican citizen, in Bloomington last year. Munoz-Guatemala had previously been convicted of fourth-degree criminal sexual conduct and had been put on a detainer by immigration officials. Munoz-Guatemala ignored the agents’ commands, including to fully roll down his car window, so Ross broke open his rear window and reached inside to unlock the door.

Munoz-Guatemala put the vehicle in drive and accelerated onto the curb, the charges said. Ross was dragged alongside the vehicle and twice fired his Taser as Munoz-Guatemala weaved back and forth “in an apparent attempt to shake” him from the car. About 300 feet down the road, Munoz-Guatemala re-entered the street and the force knocked the officer from the car.

The agent required 20 stitches for a deep cut in his right arm and another 13 stitches in his left hand, according to court documents. A jury convicted Munoz-Guatemala of assaulting a federal officer in December.

Hours after the shooting Wednesday morning, Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem said the agent involved had “been dragged by a vehicle” in an earlier incident. At the time, she did not provide specific location details.

But she described the unnamed officer as “an experienced” agent who’d been in similar situations before and “followed his training.”

The Department of Homeland Security confirmed Thursday that the agent who killed Good was the same officer dragged by a suspect in Bloomington last June. Although Ross was not named in the 13-page indictment of the driver, he is

identified in several court records filed in the case, including photo exhibits from the hospital. He is also listed by name as a witness.

A law enforcement source, who is not authorized to speak publicly, confirmed that Ross is the shooter.

Vice President JD Vance took questions at the White House on Thursday afternoon, announcing a new associate attorney general to oversee fraud – with a mission that will begin in Minnesota.

He also defended the agent's actions.

"That very ICE officer nearly had his life ended ... six months ago," Vance said, referring to a car-dragging incident with the agent.

"You think maybe he's a little bit sensitive about somebody ramming him?"

Asked about Gov. Tim Walz's comments that the Trump administration's escalation of ICE agents amplified and led to the shooting dismissed his former vice presidential opponent.

"I don't care what Tim Walz says," Vance said.

Chris Vondracek of the Minnesota Star Tribune contributed to this story.

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ICE officer who shot Renee Good in Minneapolis has served decades in military and law enforcement

A bullet hole is seen in the windshield as law enforcement officers work the scene of a shooting involving federal law enforcement agents, Wednesday, Jan. 7, 2026, in Minneapolis. (AP Photo/Tom Baker)

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The federal agent who shot and killed a driver in Minneapolis is an Iraq War veteran who has served for nearly two decades in the Border Patrol and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, according to records obtained Thursday by The Associated Press.

Jonathan Ross, who shot and killed Renee Good on Wednesday, has served as a deportation officer with ICE since 2015, records show. He

was seriously injured last summer when he was dragged by the vehicle of a fleeing suspect whom he shot with a stun gun.

Federal officials have not named the officer who shot Good, a 37-year-old mother who was shot as she tried to drive away from federal agents. But Homeland Secretary Kristi Noem said the agent who shot Good had been dragged by a vehicle last June, and a department spokesperson confirmed Noem was referring to the Bloomington, Minnesota, case in which documents identified the injured officer as Ross.

Noem and other Trump administration officials have defended the agent as an experienced law enforcement professional who followed his training and shot Good after he believed she was trying to run him or other agents over with her vehicle. Video has raised questions about whether the shooting was in self-defense, and the FBI is investigating the deadly use of force. Some protesters are demanding that Ross face criminal charges, and Minnesota authorities also want to investigate.

Related Stories

Attempts to reach Ross, 43, at phone numbers and email addresses associated with him were not immediately successful.

Here are some things to know about him:

Experienced military and law enforcement officer

In courtroom testimony last month, Ross said he deployed to Iraq from 2004 to 2005 with the Indiana National Guard. Ross said he served as a machine gunner on a gun truck as part of a combat patrol team.

He said he returned from Iraq in 2005, went to college and joined the Border Patrol in 2007 near El Paso, Texas. He worked there until 2015, serving as a field intelligence agent gathering and analyzing information on cartels and drug and human smuggling.

Ross said he has served as a deportation officer based in Minnesota since he joined ICE in 2015. He is assigned to fugitive operations, seeking to arrest "higher value targets" in the ICE region that includes Minneapolis, he testified last month. He said that he was also a team leader with the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force.

"So I develop the targets, create a target package, surveillance, and then develop a plan to execute the arrest warrant," he said.

Ross said that he was also a firearms instructor, an active shooter instructor, a field intelligence officer and member of the SWAT team. He said that he attended the Border Patrol's academy in New Mexico, where he learned to speak Spanish.

Seriously injured last June

Ross was a leader of a team of agents who went to arrest a man who was in the U.S. illegally in the Minneapolis suburb of Bloomington on June 17. Agents had gathered outside the home of the man, Roberto Munoz-Guatemala, who left in his car, according to court records.

FBI agents activated emergency sirens and lights instructing him to pull over but he did not. Ross pulled his vehicle diagonally in front of Munoz-Guatemala to force him to stop.

Ross and an FBI agent identified themselves as police and pointed guns at Munoz-Guatemala, who raised his hands. Ross then

approached Munoz-Guatemala's vehicle and ordered him to put it in park.

Ross told the driver to lower his window all the way down and warned that he would break it if he did not. Ross used a device known as a "spring-loaded window punch" to break the rear driver's side window and reached inside the car to unlock the driver's door.

Munoz-Guatemela drove off while Ross' arm was caught in the vehicle and accelerated, dragging Ross down the street. Ross fired his Taser, striking Munoz-Guatemala with prongs in the head, face and shoulder.

Munoz-Guatemela was not incapacitated by the Taser, prosecutors said, and kept driving, taking Ross the length of a football field in 12 seconds. Ross was knocked free from the vehicle by force after Munoz-Guatemala drove onto a curb for a second time and back to the street.

Ross' right arm was bleeding, and an FBI agent applied a tourniquet. Eventually, he received dozens of stitches at a hospital. Prosecutors said he had "suffered multiple large cuts, and abrasions to his knee, elbow, and face."

"It was pretty excruciating pain," Ross testified.

Munoz-Guatemela was bleeding from his injuries and had a woman call 911, saying that he was assaulted and didn't know whether the person trying to stop him was an officer. He was arrested and charged with assault on a federal officer with a dangerous or deadly weapon.

A jury found Munoz-Guatemala guilty at a trial last month, finding he "should reasonably have known that Jonathan Ross was a law enforcement officer and not a private citizen attempting to assault him."

Federal officials defend the agent without identifying him

Vice President J.D. Vance praised the agent's service to the country Thursday without naming him, saying the ICE officer "deserves a debt of gratitude."

"This is a guy who's actually done a very, very important job for the United States of America," Vance said. "He's been assaulted. He's been attacked. He's been injured because of it."

DHS assistant Tricia McLaughlin declined to confirm the agent's identity Thursday, saying doing so would be dangerous for the safety of him and his family. But she noted that he had been selected for ICE's special response team, which includes a 30-hour tryout and additional training on specialized skills such as breaching techniques, perimeter control, hostage rescue and firearms.

"He acted according to his training," she said. "This officer is a longtime ICE officer who has been serving his country his entire life."

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Vigilantism in the United States

Vigilantism in the United States of America is defined as acts which violate societal limits which are intended to defend and protect citizens from some form of attack or some form of harm.[1]

In the United States, a citizen's arrest is a procedure rooted in common law and protected by the Constitution, allowing civilians to detain individuals they have witnessed or reasonably suspect of committing a crime.

The exact circumstances under which this type of arrest, also known as a detention, can be made varies widely from state to state.[2]

History

The Regulator movement in colonial South Carolina

When the British set up the American colonies, they established law enforcement along British lines. Population growth was slow and the law enforcement system worked. One important exception came in North Carolina, where rapid migration to the frontier established a new western region without a strong local government. There emerged the only major vigilante movement in colonial America. The term "vigilante" was not yet in use, and the acitivists called themselves "regulators." The poor farmers bitterly resented the overpaid corrupt local officials appointed by a distant elite, By 1768 the decentralized movement was highly popular in the backcountry. When two local leaders were arrested, 700 Regulators turned out to free them. In 1771 the governor led a force of a thousand men into the heart of the uprising, but Regulators led twice that number into the Battle of Alamance. The insurgents lacked leadership and strategy. They were quickly routed with nine Regulators dead. Seven of the leaders were executed and others fled the state. When the American Revolution broke out four years later, North Carolina's elite supported the Patriot cause, while the Regulator districts were much more likely to be neutral or pro-British.[3][4]

San Francisco 1850s

The San Francisco Committee of Vigilance was a vigilante group formed in 1851 and reorganized in 1856 in response to rampant crime and corruption in San Francisco, California. The need for extralegal intervention was apparent with the explosive population growth following the discovery of gold in 1848. The small town of about 900 individuals grew to a booming city of over 20,000 very rapidly. This growth in population overwhelmed the small law enforcement system. The boss-controlled Democratic Party machine was dominant, and used Irish Catholic men to manipulate the precinct vote totals. The opposition Know Nothing movement represented the Protestant businessmen, and they formed the vigilance movement to counter the Democratic machine. The vigilantes hanged eight people and forced

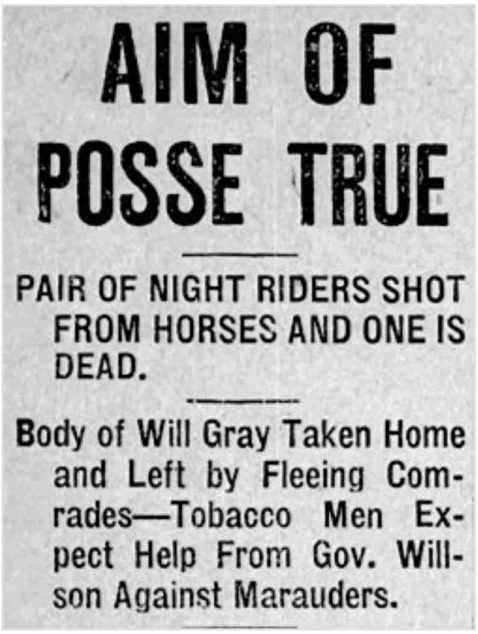
several elected officials to resign. The Committee of Vigilance formally relinquished power after three months, but its retired leaders ran the new Republican Party and controlled local politics for the next decade.[5][6]

Portsmouth Square in 1858, San Francisco Committee of Vigilance site of origin

The Night Riders

The Night Riders was the militant, terrorist faction of tobacco farmers during a popular resistance to the monopolistic practices of the American Tobacco Company (ATC) of James B. Duke. On September 24, 1904, the tobacco planters of western Kentucky and the neighboring counties of West Tennessee formed the Dark Fired Tobacco District, or Black Patch District Planters' Protective Association of Kentucky and Tennessee (called "the Association" or PPA). It urged farmers to boycott the ATC and refuse to sell at the ruinously low prices being offered in a quasi-monopoly market.[7]

Groups of a more militant faction of farmers, trained and led by Dr. David A. Amoss of Caldwell County, Kentucky, resorted to terrorism—most notably, the lynching of the Walker family and the lynching of Captain Quentin Rankin and the kidnapping of Colonel R. Z. Taylor. Becoming known as the Night Riders, due to their night-time activities, they also targeted and destroyed the tobacco warehouses of the ATC. Their largest raid of this type was their occupation and attack on areas of Hopkinsville, Kentucky, in 1907.[8]



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PAIR OF NIGHT RIDERS SHOT FROM HORSES AND ONE IS DEAD.

Body of Will Gray Taken Home and Left by Fleeing Comrades—Tobacco Men Expect Help From Gov. Willson Against Marauders.

Headline in the *Lexington Herald-Leader* of December 10, 1907

Mexican border

- Formed in 2000, Ranch Rescue was an organization in the southwest United States. Ranchers called upon Ranch Rescue to remove illegal immigrants and squatters from their property. Its largest chapter in Arizona was later disbanded in 2003,[9] and the organization's website went down in 2007.
- The Minuteman Project has been described as vigilantes dedicated to expelling people who cross the US-Mexico border illegally.[10][11]

Other episodes

- Lynching was the most common form of vigilantism in the United States with several thousand episodes during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The great majority of victims were African American men in the South.[12]
- In the 1750s, Gideon Gibson Jr. became a significant landowner in South Carolina. Due to various tax acts, some shareholders abandoned their lands along the Santee River, resorting to raiding others' farms for survival. With no help from the distant Royal Governor, the local farmers formed vigilante groups to capture and publicly punish these raiders, marking the rise of vigilantism in the area.

- The San Luis Obispo Vigilance Committee in San Luis Obispo, California, was known to have hanged six Californios, as well as engage in battles around the area.[13][14]
- During racial unrest in Newark, New Jersey, in the late 1960s, local activist Anthony Imperiale, later a city councilman and state legislator, founded a neighborhood safety patrol that critics claimed was a vigilante group.[15]
- Operating since 2002, perverted-justice.com opponents have accused the website of being modern-day cyber vigilantes.[16]
- In a number of U.S. cities, individuals have created real-life superhero personas, donning masks and costumes to patrol their neighborhoods, sometimes maintaining an uneasy relationship with local police departments who believe what they are doing could be dangerous to the costumed crusaders themselves, or could devolve into vigilantism.[17][18][19][20]
- In October 2011 in the United States, a vigilante operating in Seattle, named Phoenix Jones was arrested and forced to reveal his true identity, after a confrontation with two groups who were fighting.
- On October 9, 2013, the Federal Bureau of Investigation apprehended members of the New York divorce coercion gang, a rabbinical group that administered extrajudicial beatings and torture to Jewish husbands.[21]
- Brian Thompson, the CEO of the American health insurance company UnitedHealthcare, was shot and killed in Midtown Manhattan, New York City, on December 4, 2024. The shooting occurred early in the morning outside an entrance to the New York Hilton Midtown.[22] The suspect, initially described as a white man wearing a mask, fled the scene.[23] The words "delay", "deny", and "depose" were inscribed on the cartridge cases used during the shooting. Thompson had previously faced criticism for the company's rejection of insurance claims, and his family reported that he had received death threats. For further information, see *Killing of Brian Thompson*.

See also

- Citizen detective
- Extrajudicial punishment
- Frontier justice
- Feud
- Internet vigilantism
- List of feuds in the United States
- Lynching in the United States
- Mobbing, the coming together of people for the purpose of bullying an individual
- Neighborhood watch
- *Posse comitatus*, the "citizen enforcer" band is either capable of acting lawfully as an exceptional agent of justice; or it is in danger of deteriorating into lawlessness which is motivated by populist malice
- Presumption of guilt
- Public humiliation
- Real-life superhero, groups of vigilantes who wear comic book style costumes
- Regulator Movement a failed movement in North Carolina in 1770s.
- Regulator Movement in South Carolina a successful effort in early 1760s
- Scam baiting, a form of vigilantism against scams
- The Night Riders
- Vigilantism, worldwide perspective
- Vigilance committee, organized vigilantes in the 1800s United States
- Vigilante film, films based on revenge theme
- Violent non-state actor
- Whistleblower
- Whitecapping
- Tarring and feathering

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